

VZCZCXRO9325
OO RUEHDBU
DE RUEHBUL #0840 0580630
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 270630Z FEB 06
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8547
INFO RUEHXP/ALL NATO POST COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 0123
RUEHML/AMEMBASSY MANILA 1455
RHEHNSC/NSC WASH DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J5/UNMA//
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//J3//
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 5600
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUMICEA/JICCENT MACDILL AFB FL
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 000840

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DEPT FOR SA/FO AMBASSADOR QUINN, S/CT, SA/A,
NSC FOR AHARRIMAN, KAMEND
CENTCOM FOR POLAD, CG CFC-A, CG CJTF-76

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/05/2026

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: MAIMANA REVISED - A STEP AWAY FROM DISASTER

REF: A) KABUL 725 B) KABUL 746

Classified By: AMBASSADOR RONALD NEUMANN FOR REASONS
1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) In the last week, more information has come to light about the events in Maimana on February 7. In particular, we have now been told that the 200 police who had been stationed in Maimana as a GOA Quick Reaction Force (QRF) were actively supporting the rioters. ISAF has obtained film footage of police distributing weapons to the crowd and encouraging them to attack the PRT. Once the order finally came down from the MOI for the police to disperse the crowd, the riot ended quickly) as soon as the police moved out, the people backed off. The police QRF, whose station was next door to the PRT, answered to the authority of the Deputy Police Chief, who along with the Deputy Governor are Junbesh party activists. Their support of the rioters is seen by ISAF as part of a larger powerplay between the Junbesh and Azadi factions.

¶2. (C) It has also become clear that the rioters, who are estimated to have numbered as many as 1,000 people, included many women and children. The PRT was manned with 40 officers and soldiers. Early on in the attack, several shots were fired into the crowd, resulting in a few deaths. However, the acting PRT commander, seeing the potential for a massacre if his troops responded too aggressively, maintained a holding position while waiting for reinforcements from the police and/or the ISAF QRF.

¶3. (C) Comment: These additional details suggest that our earlier comments regarding the PRT commander's decision (ref a) may have been premature. Indeed, it may well be that the Norwegian PRT deserves commendation. Still, the underlying conditions that prevented a rapid resolution of the event remain valid: ISAF lacks sufficient air support and QRF capacity to respond to a rapid escalation of violence, and the PRTs in some areas may have insufficient personnel to defend themselves without relying on the ANP) which will

remain a very weak reed over the medium term. As noted ref b, we believe there is a potential for increased violence this spring. It may manifest itself not only in the volatile south and east, but also in spikes of violence in ISAF areas. We will continue to work closely with the GOA on improving police capability and responsiveness, as well as on the critical issue of replacing criminal or corrupt leadership. However we also reiterate that ISAF contributing nations should review not only their rules of engagement but also their policies toward the role, mission, and staffing of their PRTs. The riots in Maimana, it now appears, were a whisker away from tragedy. ISAF needs the mobility, forces and mandate to deal with such situations.

NEUMANN